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INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 7060
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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: DPP PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE FRANK HSIEH'S
U.S. TRIP, TAIWAN'S UN BID

¶1. Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies focused news coverage July 25 on Taiwan's failed attempt to join the United Nations; on DPP presidential candidate Frank Hsieh's trip to the United States; on Taiwan's rising stock market index; and on a financial scandal allegedly involving a DPP legislator. The pro-unification "United Daily News" front-paged a banner headline that said "Bian's Application for [Taiwan's] Membership in the United Nations is Rejected." The same paper also ran a banner headline on page four that read "[Frank] Hsieh: Taiwan Is Already Independent; There Is No Need to Hold a Referendum [on Independence]." The centrist, KMT-leaning "China Times" ran a news story on page three with the headline "U.S. High-ranking Official: [Taiwan's] UN Bid Has Put Taiwan-U.S. Relations in the Worst Situation in the Past Seven Years."

¶2. In terms of editorials and commentaries, a column in the mass-circulation "Apple Daily" commented on DPP presidential candidate Frank Hsieh's U.S. trip. The article said Hsieh is an expert in the stunt show of rhetoric, and his U.S. trip this time is a test of his wits and forensic skills, as well as a test to see how he will survive the trap of oratory. With regard to Taiwan's UN bid, an editorial in the pro-independence "Liberty Times" criticized the UN for overlooking Taiwan's rights and will in joining the world body. An "Apple Daily" editorial, on the contrary, criticized President Chen Shui-bian's attempt to push for Taiwan's UN bid. The article called on Taiwan to maintain good terms with the United States, China and Japan. An editorial in the pro-independence, English-language "Taiwan News" said the UN's decision to reject Taiwan's application "makes a mockery of the UN's own declared values of human rights and self-determination of peoples." End summary.

¶3. DPP Presidential Candidate Frank Hsieh's U.S. Trip

"Language as a Swing"

Columnist Antonio Chiang noted in the mass-circulation "Apple Daily" [circulation: 500,000] (7/25):

"Washington D.C. is a political jungle, and the various people waiting to meet with Frank Hsieh there do not really hope to understand his position on different policies. Rather, they want to test his wits and forensic ability, and they want to see how he will survive the trap of oratory. Hsieh is a semanticist, who is aware that each word has its own weight, color, sound and shape. The way words are arranged and grouped is more important than the significance of the words themselves. The function of a language is not necessarily to express [one's views]; it can also be a mask to cover up and to evade [questions]. Hsieh is an expert in this respect, and his performance in Washington D.C. is a stunt show of rhetoric; no one in the DPP can do it better than he does."

"Taiwan-U.S. relations are gradually dwindling during A-Bian's term of office. The mistrust and impatience the Bush administration has had toward A-Bian have gradually endangered Taiwan's national interests, and anyone who is elected the next president will have to try to fix this problem. Hsieh is facing a difficult task in terms of his trip to the United States this time, but A-Bian submitted Taiwan's application for membership in the United Nations just prior to his departure. This was Hsieh's first test. ...

"One should not lie, but one does not need to tell the truth, either; even if what a person says is true, he does not need to say it all at one time. This is the way of survival for politicians. Words of a politician are always like a swing, which sways as power pushes it. What [a politician] does not say is always more important than what he has already said."

4. Taiwan's UN Bid

A) "The United Nations Must Not Overlook Taiwan's Rights and Will in Joining the International Body"

The pro-independence, English-language "Liberty Times" [circulation: 720,000] editorialized (7/25):

"... Taiwan has a fatal blind spot in terms of its foreign relations -- namely, it is under an anti-China obsession. If history is able to teach us a lesson, Taiwan's foreign relations should be pro-China, pro-U.S. and also pro-Japan. As a small country, Taiwan cannot afford to challenge irrationally its neighboring ruffians, not unless it has secured military assistance from other gangsters. ... The United States and other big countries have clearly expressed their opposition to Taiwan independence. How is Taiwan going to declare independence without any support? How does it plan to join the UN under the name Taiwan? What else can it do even if the referendum [on Taiwan's UN bid] is passed? It is merely a move to look for trouble and openly offend the United States.
U.S. TRIP, TAIWAN'S UN BID

"The best scenario for Taiwan's foreign relations is to maintain a friendly relationship with both the United States and China. The second best option is to be pro-U.S. and anti-China, and the third best one is to be on good terms with China while keeping a distance with the United States. The worst scenario [for Taiwan] will be anti-China, keeping a distance from the United States, or even anti-U.S. ... Over the past seven years of Chen Shui-bian's term of office, his most unsuccessful policy was about Taiwan's foreign relations. His policy has not only stirred up China's antagonism against Taiwan, but has also alienated the United States and thus disparaged Taiwan; it has turned the second best situation that Taiwan was originally in into the worst.

"Maintaining good terms with China does not mean [Taiwan] must accept the one China [policy] or become a special administrative region. Rather, it means that [Taiwan] can, given the condition that it does not violate its principles, refrain itself and act in a prudent, low-profile manner to maintain the greatest flexibility or to make compromise. ... Maintaining a friendly relationship with the United States, Japan and China is in the highest national interests of Taiwan. President Chen's clumsy and stupid foreign policy has already put Taiwan in an extremely unfavorable position. ..."

B) "Taiwan Ought Stay on Good Terms with the United States and China"

The mass-circulation "Apple Daily" [circulation: 500,000] editorialized (7/25):

"... President Chen's application [for Taiwan's membership in the United Nations] was returned by the UN Secretariat, and such a move has evidently violated relevant UN regulations -- a result that can be reasonably attributed to the hindrance created by China. Even so, Chen's first step is of major significance, because it has laid out the strong will of the 23 million Taiwan people to join the UN clearly to the international community. Such a way to express [the Taiwan people's] will itself indicated that the country composed of 23 million Taiwan people is an independent, sovereign state, and

Taiwan is by no means a part of China as Beijing has claimed! ..."

C) "U.N. Rejection Is Not Taiwan's Loss"

The pro-independence, English-language "Taiwan News" [circulation: 20,000] editorialized (7/25):

"The decision by the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs to 'return' the application for Taiwan's membership in the U.N., submitted last Thursday by President Chen Shui-bian, makes a mockery of the U.N.'s own declared values of human rights and self-determination of peoples. However, we do not believe that this action is tantamount to a major substantive 'setback' for Taiwan's effort to enter the U.N., but rather marks a step forward in a 'long march' through the U.N.'s institutions and in drawing support for 'democratic Taiwan' in world public opinion. Indeed, the application by President Chen as Taiwan's head of state with a majority electoral mandate has forced the U.N. to respond directly and officially to Taiwan's application and face the reality that the 23 million people of Taiwan are not represented in the U.N. ...

"A similar refusal to handle a direct petition by Taiwan's citizens for U.N. membership according to proper procedures would be a serious infraction to the U.N. Charter and a grave self-inflicted blow to the credibility of both the organization and U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-woon himself. Indeed, such a refusal would

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signal that the U.N., which took decades to demonstrate that it was not the client of the United States, has instead willingly submitted to the hegemony of the PRC. ..."

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